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OCTOBER 12, 1972

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NSA, NAVY, USAF, & OSD  
review(s) completed.

MORI PER C03353723

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

HENRY A. KISSINGER

SUBJECT:

SITUATION IN VIETNAM

SOUTH OF QUANG TRI CITY, THE AIRBORNE DIVISION'S 2ND BRIGADE SECURED AN OBJECTIVE TWO KILOMETERS NORTHEAST OF FIRE SUPPORT BASE ANNE. ENEMY DEFENSES ARE WELL ORGANIZED IN THAT AREA AND THEY ARE SUPPORTED BY ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE. THE 1ST AIRBORNE BRIGADE ON THE NORTHERN FRONT HAS NOT MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD SECURING THE THACH HAN RIVER LINE. THE 3RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE IS ATTEMPTING TO DISRUPT ENEMY RESUPPLY ROUTES AND STORAGE AREAS.

LITTLE ACTION WAS REPORTED YESTERDAY IN THE REST OF MILITARY REGION 1. THE 6TH ARVN REGIMENT HAS ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TIEN PHUOC AREA FREEING THE 2ND ARVN REGIMENT TO OPERATE BETWEEN TIEN PHUOC AND QUE SON.

THE SITUATION AT BA TO HAS IMPROVED WITH ARVN UNITS NOW CONTROLLING THE HIGH GROUND WEST AND SOUTHWEST OF THE TOWN. CIVILIANS IN THAT AREA REPORT THAT B-52 STRIKES HAVE CAUSED HEAVY CASUALTIES TO TWO ENEMY BATTALIONS OPERATING WEST AND SOUTH OF THE DISTRICT TOWN.

IN MILITARY REGION 2, COMBAT ACTIVITY REMAINED AT A LOW LEVEL ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A FLARE-UP OF ENEMY ACTIVITY IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS. THE BORDER RANGER CAMPS AT DAK SEANG AND BEN HET REPORTED INDIRECT FIRE WITH BEN HET BEING HIT BY OVER 500 ROUNDS. LATEST REPORTS INDICATE THAT BEN HET IS AGAIN BEING HIT WITH HEAVY INDIRECT FIRE AND THAT A GROUND ATTACK IS UNDERWAY. THE WEATHER IS GOOD AND THE CAMP DEFENDERS ARE GETTING GOOD AIR SUPPORT.

ENEMY ACTIVITY IN MILITARY REGION 3 CONTINUED TO CENTER IN SOUTHERN BINH DUONG PROVINCE WHERE THE ENEMY STILL OCCUPIES SEVERAL HAMLETS. IN MILITARY REGION 4, ENEMY ACTIVITY REMAINED MODERATE AND SCATTERED. IN THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS AREA OF CAMBODIA, THE DISTRICT TOWN OF TUN LOAP WAS REOCCUPIED BY AN ARVN RANGER BATTALION EARLY LAST NIGHT.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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TODAY A TOTAL OF 453 U.S. WACTICAL AIR SORTIES WERE FLOWN, 229 OF WHICH HIT TARGETS IN NORTH VIETNAM. IN ADDITION, 19 B-52 STRIKES WERE FLOWN OVER NORTH VIETNAM AND FOUR WERE FLOWN IN AOS.

#### MILITARY REGION 1

THE TEMPO OF ACTIVITY INCREASED IN THE AIRBORNE DIVISION'S DRIVE WEST FROM THE QUANG TRI CITY AREA.

-- WELL ORGANIZED ENEMY DEFENSES, SUPPORTED BY ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE ARE MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR THE AIRBORNE UNITS TO ADVANCE. THE 2ND BRIGADE MOVED CLOSER TO FIRE SUPPORT BASE ANNE BUT THE 1ST BRIGADE HAS NOT MADE MUCH PROGRESS TOWARD SECURING THE SOUTHERN BANK OF THE THACH HAN RIVER.

-- RANGER FORCES HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED REAR AREA SECURITY TO ALLOW THE 3RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE TO DEVOTE MORE FORCES TO ITS EFFORTS TO DISRUPT ENEMY RESUPPLY ROUTES AND STORAGE AREAS.

-- THE 1ST ARVN DIVISION IS PLANNING FURTHER OPERATIONS IN THE AREA AROUND HUE. LITTLE ACTION WAS REPORTED IN THE 1ST DIVISION'S AREA OF OPERATION YESTERDAY.

-- ACTIVITY WAS AT A LOW LEVEL IN THE ARVN 3RD DIVISION'S AREA OF OPERATION YESTERDAY. THE 6TH ARVN REGIMENT HAS ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TIEN PHUOC AREA, FREEING THE 2ND ARVN REGIMENT TO OPERATE BETWEEN TIEN PHUOC AND QUE SON. THE PLAN CALLS FOR THE 2ND ARVN TO SECURE THE HIGH GROUND THEN LINK UP WITH UNITS WEST OF TAM KY.

-- IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE, ARVN FORCES CLEARING ROUTE 1 BETWEEN DUC PHO AND MO DUC ARE NEARING LINK-UP AGAINST MODERATE ENEMY RESISTANCE. TO THE WEST THE SITUATION AT BA TO HAS IMPROVED. ARVN UNITS NOW HOLD THE HIGH GROUND AROUND THE TOWN.

#### MILITARY REGION 2

THE BORDER RANGER CAMPS AT DAK SEANG AND BEN HET REPORTED INDIRECT FIRE ATTACKS YESTERDAY.

-- OVER 500 ROUNDS LANDED AT BEN HET YESTERDAY AND LAST NIGHT. TODAY THE CAMP IS AGAIN RECEIVING HEAVY INDIRECT FIRE

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AND LATEST REPORTS INDICATE THAT AN ENEMY GROUND ATTACK IS UNDERWAY. VNAF SPOOKY AND U.S. SPECTRE GUNSHIPS ARE ON STATION IN DEFENSE OF THE CAMP.

-- A RECENT RALLIER REPORTED THAT SUPPLIES ARE BEING TRANSPORTED BY TRUCK FROM CAMBODIA TO A STORAGE AREA 20 KILOMETERS WEST OF DUC CO. THIS UNDERSCORES THE ENEMY'S INTENT TO EFFECT BATTLEFIELD RESUPPLY IN PLACE..

#### MILITARY REGION 3

ARVN FORCES HAVE MADE SPORADIC SMALL CONTACTS AS THEY SWEEP THE AREA IN SOUTHERN BINH DUONG PROVINCE WHERE THE ENEMY STILL OCCUPIES SEVERAL HAMLETS.

-- GENERAL MINH CONTINUES TO SHIFT FORCES SOUTHWARD INTO POSITIONS ASTRIDE THE APPROACHES TO THE SAIGON AREA.

-- AN ADDITIONAL RANGER BATTALION DEPLOYED TO GIA DINH PROVINCE YESTERDAY AND WAS PLACED UNDER CONTROL OF THE CAPITAL MILITARY DISTRICT COMMANDER.

-- TWO MORE RANGER BATTALIONS HAVE BEEN ALERTED FOR MOVEMENT TO GIA DINH.

#### MILITARY REGION 4

ENEMY ACTIVITY REMAINED MODERATE AND SCATTERED WITH NUMEROUS SMALL GROUND CONTACTS, MOSTLY ARVN-INITIATED, ACCOUNTING FOR THE 211 ENEMY KILLED YESTERDAY.

-- THE DISTRICT TOWN OF TUN LOAP ON ROUTE 2 IN THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS AREA OF CAMBODIA WAS RETAKEN YESTERDAY BY AN ARVN RANGER BATTALION. THE TOWN HAD BEEN EVACUATED ON SEPTEMBER 8 BY FANK.

-- FANK AND ARVN REPRESENTATIVES ARE DISCUSSING PLANS TO OPEN ROUTE 2 FROM THE BORDER NORTH TO KOMPONG CHREY. ARVN NOW HAS SIX MANEUVER BATTALIONS IN THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS AREA AND HAS BEEN VERY PROMPT IN ASSISTING FANK TO STABILIZE THE SITUATION.

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# U.S. AIR AND NAVAL ACTIVITY

THE FOLLOWING AIR SORTIES WERE FLOWN TODAY:

	MR-1	MR-2	MR-3	MR-4	NVN	TOTAL
U.S. TACAIR	118	36	46	24	229	453
VNAF TACAIR	48	45	76	46	8	267
B-52	30	3	44	3	19	103

NO B-52 SORTIES WERE FLOWN AGAINST TARGETS IN CAMBODIA AND 4 IN LAOS.

-- IN AN AERIAL ENGAGEMENT OVER NORTH VIETNAM, ONE MIG-21 WAS SHOT DOWN BY U.S. AIRCRAFT. IN THE SAME ENGAGEMENT, ONE U.S. F-4 WAS ALSO DOWNED.

YESTERDAY THE FOLLOWING U.S. TACTICAL AIR STRIKES WERE FLOWN:

RP-1	RP-2	RP-3	RP-4	RP-5	RP-6A	RP-6B	OFFSHORE	TOTAL
41	33	26	26	26	5	42	44	243

ALTOGETHER, 143 SORTIES WERE FLOWN NORTH OF THE 20TH PARALLEL AND 100 WERE FLOWN SOUTH OF THE 20TH.

YESTERDAY ADVERSE WEATHER CAUSED SOME STRIKES TO BE DIVERTED TO OTHER TARGETS. EIGHT PRIMARY AND FIVE SECONDARY TARGETS WERE HIT.

U.S. AIR FORCE F-111S FLYING NIGHT SORTIES STRUCK EIGHT TARGETS, INCLUDING THE YEN BAI AIRFIELD 70 MILES NORTHWEST OF HANOI AND THE THUONG CHAU BARRACKS 35 MILES NORTH OF HANOI. ONE FIRE WAS STARTED AT YEN BAI, AND TWO BUILDINGS WERE DESTROYED AND TWO FIRES STARTED AT THUONG CHAU. DARKNESS OBSCURED RESULTS AT OTHER F-111 TARGETS. USAF F-4S ALSO STRUCK THE YEN BAI AIRFIELD USING LORAN BOMBING TECHNIQUES. THIS DELIVERY TECHNIQUE PREVENTED OBSERVATION OF THE STRIKE RESULTS.

U.S. NAVY AIRCRAFT BOMBED THE GIA LAM RAILROAD SHOPS 3 MILES EAST OF HANOI AND CAUSED SIX SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS AND ONE SUSTAINED FIRE WITH BLACK SMOKE. THE PHU CAC BA TRANSHIPMENT

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POINT 20 MILES EAST OF HANOI ALSO WAS STRUCK BY USN AIRCRAFT. TWO SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS RESULTED. A COMMUNICATIONS STATION AT THANH HA 20 MILES NORTH OF DONG HOI WAS BOMBED, AND ONE SECONDARY EXPLOSION WAS REPORTED.

IN STRIKES AGAINST INTERDICTION POINTS, MILITARY FACILITIES, AND TIME-SENSITIVE TARGETS, USAF AND USN AIRCRAFT DESTROYED OR DAMAGED EIGHT TRUCKS, 10 WATERCRAFT, SIX BUILDINGS, 335 BOXES OF SUPPLIES, AND ONE GUN. THE AIRCREWS ALSO REPORTED 33 SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS, TWO SECONDARY FIRES, AND TWO ROAD CUTS.

#### NAVAL OPERATIONS

NORTH OF VINH, TWO DESTROYERS SHELLED THE TU MY RAILROAD SIDING AND THE NEARBY HAU GIAP STORAGE AREA. THREE OTHER DESTROYERS STRUCK SIX POL STORAGE AREAS BETWEEN HON LA ISLAND AND DONG HOI AND SHELLED THE HON CO ISLAND COAST DEFENSE SITE. SURVEILLANCE OF THE HON LA ANCHORAGE AREA REVEALED NO OFFLOADING ACTIVITY BY HUNG CHI 162.

#### LAOS

THE LAO ARMY FORCE THAT INITIATED OPERATION OCTOBER SOUTHWEST OF MUONG SOUI ON THE 6TH HAS HAD SOME SUCCESS, ACCORDING TO INTERCEPTED ENEMY MESSAGES. COMMUNIST INSURGENTS SAID THE FRIENDLY ELEMENTS CUT ROUTE 4/7 ABOUT 5 MILES WEST OF MUONG SOUI ON THE 10TH. THE INSURGENTS REQUESTED THAT ONE FULL BATTALION, AN ADDITIONAL COMPANY, TANKS, AND ARTILLERY BE DRAWN FROM DEFENSIVE POSITIONS TO COUNTERATTACK BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT FORCES "HAVE A CHANCE TO EXPAND THEIR AREA OF CONQUEST."

SOUTH OF THE PLAINE DES JARRES, THREE ENEMY TANKS MOVED THROUGH IRREGULAR POSITIONS 1 HOUR AFTER A 300-ROUND ARTILLERY ATTACK. THE FRIENDLY FORCE LOST 25 MEN WOUNDED AND 35 MISSING. ALTHOUGH TANK FIRE HAS BEEN REPORTED SEVERAL TIMES, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE ENEMY HAS ACTUALLY MADE A TANK ASSAULT SINCE THE START OF GEN VANG PAO'S CURRENT OFFENSIVE.

#### POLITICAL/DIPLOMATIC

##### SOUTH VIETNAM COMMENTS ON THE PARIS TALKS

ACCORDING TO AN AP DISPATCH, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN TOLD REPORTERS ON OCTOBER 11 THAT THE GVN WILL "STICK

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WITH ITS GENERAL PROPOSALS OF LAST JANUARY 27. THE OFFICIAL REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE CURRENT PRIVATE TALKS IN PARIS BUT REPEATED THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ACCEPT A TRIPARTITE GOVERNMENT, NOTING THAT THE GVN'S POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, THE GVN'S FOREIGN MINISTER INFORMALLY TOLD NEWSMEN ON THE SAME DAY THAT THE PARIS NEGOTIATIONS ARE IN A DELICATE STAGE AND CAUTIONED REPORTERS AGAINST SPECULATING ON "ARRANGEMENTS" BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND HANOI.

#### SOVIETS REAFFIRM VIETNAM POSITION

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS HAS REPORTED FROM MOSCOW THAT SOVIET PRESIDENT PODGORNYY CONDEMNED THE UNITED STATES FOR "RUTHLESS METHODS" IN INDOCHINA. SPEAKING AT A STATE DINNER FOR THE SHAH OF IRAN ON OCTOBER 10, PODGORNYY REPORTEDLY REAFFIRMED THAT THE SOVIET UNION RESOLUTELY SUPPORTS THE HEROIC VIETNAMESE PEOPLE." HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS "BELIEVE THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS" OF THE OTHER SIDE "OFFER A GOOD BASIS FOR A FAIR POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN LINE WITH THE NATIONAL INTERESTS AND ASPIRATION OF THE PEOPLES OF THE AREA."

COMMENT: PODGORNYY'S COMMENTS DO NOT REPRESENT ANY CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSITION ON VIETNAM BUT ARE PROBABLY INTENDED TO BOLSTER THE NORTH VIETNAMESE DURING THE CURRENT STAGE OF THE PRIVATE TALKS IN PARIS.

#### FRENCH CONSULATE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED IN HANOI; PARIS PROTESTS

ON OCTOBER 11 THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTRY RELEASED A COMMUNIQUE WHICH STATED THAT THE FRENCH DELEGATE GENERAL IN HANOI, PIERRE SUSINI, HAD BEEN "GRAVELY WOUNDED" FOLLOWING AN ALLEGED U.S. AERIAL BOMBARDMENT ON OCTOBER 10, THAT SEVERAL LOCAL EMPLOYEES HAD BEEN KILLED AND "VERY SERIOUS" DAMAGE SUSTAINED BY THE FRENCH DIPLOMATIC BUILDINGS. THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO RECALLED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S SECRETARY GENERAL HAS PROTESTED THE INCIDENT TO THE U.S. AMBASSADOR, WHO "FOR HIS PART, EXPRESSED HIS PROFOUND REGRETS AND DEPLORED THE LOSSES SUFFERED BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION." IN SEPARATE REMARKS TO REPORTERS, THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN STATED THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU "HAD EXPRESSED HIS DISTRESS IN THE FACE OF THIS DEPLORABLE ACT."

RADIO HANOI HAS LOST NO TIME IN EXPLOITING THE INCIDENT WITH MAXIMUM PROPAGANDA COVERAGE. ON OCTOBER 11, RADIO HANOI BROADCAST SEVERAL BULLETINS CLAIMING THAT THE FRENCH DELEGATE GENERAL WAS IN "SERIOUS CONDITION" AT A LOCAL HOSPITAL AND HAD SUSTAINED

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**THIRD DEGREE BURNS OVER 56 PERCENT OF HIS BODY." HANOI ALSO CLAIMED THAT FOUR VIETNAMESE EMPLOYEES HAD BEEN KILLED AS A RESULT OF THE ALLEGED BOMBING THAT THE ALBANIAN CHARGE HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY WOUNDED WHILE VISITING THE DELEGATION. RADIO HANOI ALSO BROADCAST SEVERAL EMOTIONAL STATEMENTS BY FRENCH STAFF EMPLOYEES CONDEMNING THE INCIDENTS.**

**ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, OUR VIETNAM COMMAND HAS "EXPRESSED REGRET" FOR INJURY AND DAMAGE TO THE FRENCH CONSULATE DURING THE OCTOBER 10 AERIAL ENGAGEMENT, BUT HAS NOT ADMITTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INCIDENT. PRIVATELY, WE HAVE REQUESTED THAT THE CANADIAN ICC DELEGATION IN HANOI MAKE AN URGENT ON-THE-SPOT ASSESSMENT OF THE DAMAGE TO THE FRENCH DELEGATION GENERAL, SPECIFICALLY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE INCIDENT WAS CAUSED BY AIR-DROPPED ORDNANCE OR FROM SOME OTHER CAUSE SUCH AS A SAM IMPACT.**

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